

THE JOURNAL



OF THE PACIFIC COAST NUMISMATIC SOCIETY

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PACIFIC COAST NUMISMATIC SOCIETY

• Founded 1915 •

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CALENDAR OF COMING EVENTS

April 22, 1992, Wednesday at 8:00 P.M.

Coins of Argentina

SPEAKER: MARK CLARK

May 27, 1992, Wednesday at 8:00 P.M.

Barbary Coast and Some Dance Hall Checks

SPEAKER: JERRY F. SCHIMMEL

June 27, 1992, Saturday at 6:00 & 7:00 P.M.

Annual Banquet & Bingomania

New San Remo Restaurant • No-host Cocktails 6PM, Dinner 7PM

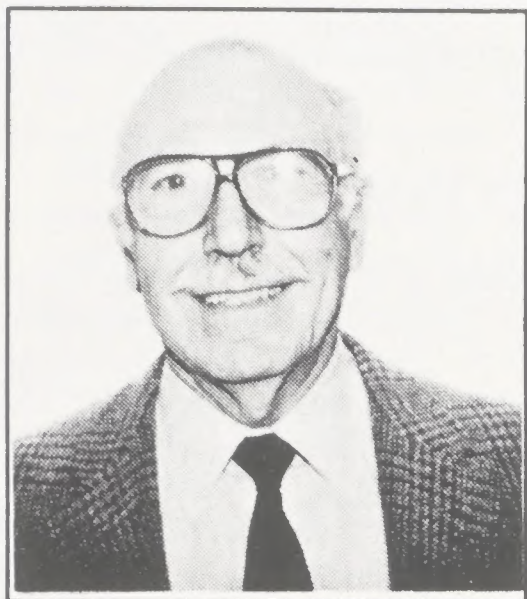
Monthly meetings are held on the 4TH Wednesday of each month at

The Knights of Columbus Hall in San Francisco

2800 Taraval Avenue (1 BLOCK WEST OF SUNSET). Guests are invited.

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

BY PAUL D. HOLTZMAN



In the last issue I commented on the kind of information—historical information—that is found, not in the written record, but in the numismatic record. I was thinking about some of the ancient heads of state—especially with short terms in office—who do not show up in the recorded history but are depicted on their coins. (However sometimes, apparently, those are the moneyers themselves or their relatives.)

Browsing recently in Ted Schwarz's *Coins as Living History*, I was reminded of instances when the only source of other kinds of information—the essential source—has been on coins. He points out that the only reason we know what the Colossus of Rhodes looked like is that it appeared on a series of ancient coins. Over 100 feet tall, the statue of Helios, the sun god, stood over the harbor at Rhodes until it was destroyed by an earthquake in 224 B.C. There were no tourists with camcorders on hand to preserve an image of that "wonder of the ancient world."

Schwarz also reports that when the statue Nike, the Winged Victory of Samothrace, arrived at the Louvre in Paris, it, too, had been destroyed. But the curators were guided in putting all those pieces together by its image on a 303 B.C. coin of Demetrius Poliorcetes of Macedon.

I remember an interesting science fiction yarn about what would happen to a society like ours if all paper disappeared. Imagine! No currency, no paper trail, no histories. But wait! The numismatists could record much of the lost history (on sheets of metal or some other medium). And besides, they would have more "money" than most.

A handwritten signature in dark ink. The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style. The first name 'Paul' is clearly legible, followed by 'D.' and then 'Holtzman'. The signature is written over a horizontal line.

THE LOWEST COMMON DENOMINATION

by George L. Smyth

BRAZIL'S 100 CRUZADOS NOTE

The portrait of President Juscelino Kubitschek is prominently portrayed on Brazil's 100 cruzados note. The main colors on this note are yellow and blue on the front and light blue on the reverse. This undated issue was issued by Banco Central Do Brazil and printed by Casa Da Moeda Do Brazil in 1986. Security features include a portrait of the president in the watermark on the left of the front, a security thread running vertically within the bill and a see-through feature. The latter attribute is noted by a pair of figures on the right and below the denomination on the front and, correspondingly, on the left of the reverse. When the note is held to the light, the positioning of the figures match each other. The note measures 155 by 75 millimeters.

Juscelino Kubitschek de Oliveira was born on September 12, 1902. He graduated from the state's medical school, the Diamantina Seminary, in 1927 by working as a part time telegraph operator. Following his residency he served as a medical officer with the loyalist forces during the Constitutionalist uprising against President Getulino Vargas in 1932. This experience gave him cause to give up medicine and find a career in politics.

From 1934 to 1937 and from 1946 to 1950 he represented the Social Democratic party from Minas Gerais in the Federal Chamber of Deputies. He also served as mayor of Belo Horizonte from 1940 to 1945, distinguishing himself in city planning and the establishment of medical clinics as well as other public service facilities. As governor of Minas Gerais from 1951 to 1955, he concentrated his energies on highway construction, power plants and agricultural and industrial development.

He received his party's nomination for the vacant presidency following the suicide of President Vargas. The campaign emphasized power, transportation and food. The illegal Communist party gave him unsolicited support, later claiming that their influence made his election possible. The conservative press claimed him to be a dangerous radical and the anti-Vargas military threatened a coup on his ascendancy. These threats never materialized and Kubitschek was inaugurated president in 1955.

During his presidency he acted on his vision of Brazil as becoming a major power among the nations of the world. He undertook ambitious programs that encompassed the construction of highways and hydroelectric power plants. He gave assistance to the private sector for the expansion of iron, steel, petroleum and coal production. His most outstanding accomplishment was the construction of Brasília, where the capital was moved in 1960. This undertaking focused attention on the country's interior and hastened settlement and development of the region's resources. Brasilia also became a showcase for the nation's contemporary architecture and urban planning.

The economic development of the country, however, came at a cost. Inflation drove up the cost of living and the volume of currency in circulation tripled, while foreign borrowing nearly doubled the foreign debt between 1956 and 1961. Although the gross national product rose to unprecedented levels, the standard of living remained relatively constant. Exacerbating the problem, vast sums of money were needed for the rehabilitation of the drought-afflicted northeast region in 1958. The economic problems finally subsided by the end of his presidency in 1961, leaving Brazil as one of the major industrial countries of the Third World.

His administration was notable for its democratic character. There were no political prisoners, basic freedoms were respected, and the three branches of government functioned normally. Literature and book publishing flourished and theater and film assumed a major significance.

He was elected to the Senate in 1962 but thoughts of a second term in 1965 were dashed when the military took power in 1964, canceling all elections and removing Kubitschek's political rights, forcing him into exile. He returned in 1967 and found work as a banker but was killed in an automobile accident on August 22, 1976.



The features on the 100 cruzados bill recognize some of his accomplishments, with engravings of roads and a power plant on the front and old and modern buildings and technology on the reverse. Because this is a common note and the face value is very low, expect to be able to obtain it for less than one dollar from a dealer.

Note from the author's collection, shown reduced to 73% of actual size.

This column has undergone a title change from "Current C Notes" at the the author's request. It will continue as a regular feature under its new title.

THE BOOKWORM



by David W. Lange

As if to furnish proof that no person could ever tire of numismatics, two books representing the extremes of numismatic subject matter have lately crossed my desk. These are *Moneta Polska*, a social and economic history of coinage in Poland, and *The Comprehensive Encyclopedia of Liberty Seated Quarters*, which doesn't even make reference to Poland.

MONETA POLSKA

Arthur J. Majewski chronicles 2,000 years of

coinage in Poland in a highly readable and generally non-technical fashion. This discovery awaits he or she who ventures so far as to actually acquire this work. Alas, such persons may be in the minority, as the alien-sounding title will likely discourage potential readers. Rest assured, however, that the text is in English, Mr. Majewski being a resident of the U.S.A. Aside from this questionable marketing strategy of employing a non-English title, the book has much to recommend it.

Rather than attempting to rephrase what has been stated so eloquently within the book's dust jacket, I will simply quote from it:

MONETA POLSKA reaches beyond the limitations of a hand book for collectors. Here meaning and sense behind the coins is explored. History and background of the coin is examined. Thus, more succinctly, Prof. Dr. Marian Gumowski's "Podrecznik Numizmatyki Polskiej" (and its German translation, "Handbuch der Polnischen Numismatik") satisfies the needs of the collector.

MONETA POLSKA attempts to additionally satisfy and clarify questions in the mind of the historian.

This it does admirably well, I might add. Having no particular interest in Polish numismatics, I still found the historical chronicle sufficiently compelling that I read it in one sitting. As this comprises slightly less than half of the total work, the casual reader will likely want to browse through succeeding chapters before returning it to the shelf. In actuality, these are appendices to the main work and contain listings of mints, mintmasters, denominations, legends and other aspects of the coinage useful for quick reference.

Illustrations are few and are included principally for the purpose of explaining the various heraldic devices employed within the coinage. A number of historical maps in sketch form are also to be found. The author refers those seeking more complete listings and illustrations of Polish coinage to the above mentioned work by Gumowski.

Perhaps the most daunting aspect of this work, beyond the obvious barrier of pronunciation for Polish names and places, is the seemingly

impossible complexity of the various denominations and equivalences. Certainly, the non-specialist cannot be expected to remember that one kwartnik is equal to 1/96 grzywny. Fortunately, there is enough background material to allow one to overlook such minutiae. The history of Poland is doubtless known to very few in this country, and the curious will come away with a slightly broadened perspective on more recent events within this ancient land.

Published in 1987, *Moneta Polska* is still available from the author, Arthur J. Majewski, P.O. Box 24-1110, Detroit, MI 48224, for \$19.50 postpaid.

THE COMPREHENSIVE ENCYCLOPEDIA OF U.S. LIBERTY SEATED QUARTERS

The Comprehensive Encyclopedia of United States Liberty Seated Quarters by Larry Briggs and Harry Smith debuted in January of this year and represents the first attempt to tackle this series in depth. It is the latest entry in the renaissance in specialist literature for the collector of United States coins which was launched 25 years ago with the publication of Al Overton's work on early half dollars.

The main emphasis in this book is on the varieties that exist for each date and mint. These are covered in some depth, a remarkable number of them being illustrated with very high quality photographs. A total of more than 600 photos are included, and this greatly simplifies the work of the variety hunter. Rarity ratings are furnished for each date/mint combination and for some of the varieties. Additional comments regarding market availability and striking quality round out the analysis.

The preliminary chapters include a history of the series, linking design changes to the ups and downs of the American economy and world bullion values. The work of John McCloskey in defining reeding gauges for the series has been updated for inclusion in this book. For the uninitiated, reeding gauges are the standard numbers of milling marks, or reeds, found on the edge of each Liberty Seated quarter dollar. These numbers vary from year to year and mint to mint, establishing a pattern that can be utilized to detect counterfeit and altered coins.

The book concludes with a glossary of terms found within, for a total of more than 250 pages. When measured with its quarto format, this makes it one of the larger entries in the specialist book series, although Al Blythe's soon-to-be published work on Liberty Seated half dimes will easily rival it. With additional books on S. L. dimes and half dollars promised, this is certain to be a bush year for students and collectors of 19th century United States silver coins.

The Comprehensive Encyclopedia is available in softcover for \$39.95 and in a limited hardcover edition at \$60. It is published by Larry Briggs Rare Coins, P.O. Box 187, Lima, OH 45802 and is also available from co-author Harry Smith at P.O. Box 705, So. San Francisco, CA 94083. All orders must include \$4 for shipping.



THE SYNGRAPHICS SCENE

. BY KEN BARR .

FIRST CHARTER PERIOD NATIONAL BANK NOTES, PART I

National bank notes were an important part of the commerce of the United States from about the Civil War through the Depression. Intended to satisfy several purposes, primarily to provide public confidence in paper money following the debacle of the "broken banks" of the 1830's through 1860's, national bank notes guaranteed a sound (i.e., government) backing for locally-needed and -used currency. No longer would the failure of one or more local banks cause a panic, wipe out individual savings and result in the restriction of local commerce.

The defining act, the National Currency Act of February 25, 1863, provided for organization of national banks with a capital of \$25,000 or more. Upon depositing one-third of its capital with the treasurer of the United States (in the form of United States bonds!), the bank would be granted a charter of twenty years from the date of the act. Later, minor modifications in 1864 and 1865 changed the length of the charter to twenty years from the date of organization of the bank and permitted state banks with branches to convert to national banks. A further pair of acts in 1870 and 1880 provided for the establishment of national gold banks and their subsequent conversion into normal national banks.

During this first charter period (1863 to 1882), banks were permitted to order banknotes from the Treasury for up to 90% of the market value of the bonds they had on deposit. The initial denominations permitted were \$5, \$10, \$20, \$50, \$100, \$500 and \$1,000, while the \$1, \$2, \$3 and \$10,000 were added in 1864. The initial denominations were all printed and used, while the latter \$3 and \$10,000 were never produced nor, apparently, even designed. The \$1 and \$2 denominations were generally printed in smaller quantities, and the enabling act required that their circulation be not more than one-sixth of the bank's total circulation. Additionally, since the sheets were printed in a four-subject \$1-\$1-\$1-\$2 format, the deuces (\$2s) are three times scarcer than the aces (\$1s). The workhorse notes were the \$5 denominations, printed in \$5-\$5-\$5-\$5 sheets, usually in the largest quantity for most banks. Other common sheet formats included \$10-\$10-\$10-\$10, \$10-\$10-\$10-\$20 and the two-subject \$50-\$100. Unusual sheet formats included \$20-\$20-\$20-\$50, \$20-\$20-\$50-\$100 and at least one \$10-\$20-\$50-\$100.

The individual denominations are highly collectible as type notes, as each had a unique design featuring historical vignettes. While national bank note fanatics usually get overly enthused about a particular city, county or state, the general syngraphist is often just interested in one of each type or one of each type and signature combination as listed in Friedberg.

The face of the \$1 note features a vignette of "Concordia", which was designed by T. A. Liebler and engraved by Charles Burt. The back features the "Landing of the Pilgrims" by F. O. C. Darley and also engraved by Burt. On most first charter notes, the left oval on the back contains the state or territorial seal

from the state or territory in which the note was issued. A few contain an American eagle like the oval at the right.



The face of the \$2 note features a vignette of the Stars and Stripes while the back features Sir Walter Raleigh presenting corn and tobacco to the English. Both vignettes were engraved by Louis Delnoce. By far, however, the most striking aspect of this note is the toppled two, showing the numeral 2 in a horizontal position, giving rise to the nickname of "Lazy Two" or "Lazy Deuce" for this type of note.

The initial printings of these first charter notes did not have the bank charter number explicitly noted anywhere on the banknote. This led to a great deal of difficulty for the Treasury in sorting notes returned for redemption, which had to be kept precisely and up-to-date in order for the bank to know whether it needed to deposit additional bonds in order to circulate additional banknotes. This was corrected by the Act of June 20, 1874, which required the charter number to be printed on the face of the note. Shortly thereafter, the series 1875 nationals started to be printed. This series added the charter number and a small "Series 1875" in red to the face of the note.

This new series corresponded to a change in printing procedures for the notes as well. Due to production limitations, the initial notes were not printed by the Bureau of Engraving and Printing (BEP) but were rather contracted out to the American Bank Note Company, the Continental Bank Note Company and the National Bank Note Company. The BEP did, however, overprint the Treasury seal and the Treasury serial number before the note was shipped to its ordering bank. Starting with the 1875 series, the BEP had sufficient capacity and therefore printed all of the notes and all of the overprints except for a strange subcontract to the Columbian Bank Note Company for the central vignette of the back of the \$5 denomination only.

REFERENCES AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER READING

- Robert Friedberg, *Paper Money of the United States*, The Coin and Currency Institute
- Gene Hessler, *The Comprehensive Catalog of U. S. Paper Money IV*, BNR Press, 1983
- John Hickman and Dean Dakes, *The Standard Catalog of National Bank Notes*, Second Edition, Krause Publications, 1990
- Don C. Kelly, *National Bank Notes, A Guide with Prices*, Second Edition, The Paper Money Institute, 1985
- Louis Van Belkum, *National Banks of the Note Issuing Period 1863-1935*, Hewitt Brothers, 1968



1946 IOWA STATEHOOD CENTENNIAL COMMEMORATIVE HALF DOLLAR



PART 11

COLLECTORS, TOO, BUY THE COIN: SALES TO COIN COLLECTORS

BY MICHAEL S. TURRINI

Dedication: This eleventh article in this Iowa half dollar series is dedicated to two individuals who have made, and I hope will continue to make, this series possible, namely, the hardworking and supportive editors of The Journal, Dave and Becky Cieniewicz.

In the prior three articles, this author has reviewed the distribution and sales of the 1946 Iowa Statehood Centennial commemorative half dollars to Iowans via the elaborate system of county quotas, sales by the local banks and detailed forms and records. This present article will center on the sales to out-of-state purchasers.

As the final sales figures compute, the goal of selling 99,000 half dollars out of the total mintage of 100,000 would not have been achieved solely by restricting sales to Iowans only. In a letter dated May 6, 1947, just about a month after the sales ceased, then State Treasurer John M. Grimes reported, "Sold Outside State @ \$3.00: 10,570." This was out of the total of 98,923 half dollars recorded as sold.¹

The Iowa Centennial Committee, the main authority and coordination for this half dollar, in its *Report of Activities* acknowledges these out-of-state sales:

Collectors, too, buy the coin. Orders came from every state in the Union, and many commendations were added to these letters for the Iowa Plan which gave individuals the first chance to buy it and kept the premium for Iowans instead of sharing it with dealers outside the State. Already the coin is included and displayed in world-famous collections such as that of the Chase National Bank in New York City which has two of the coins.²

Compared to what an Iowan had to comply with and coupled with the meticulous records and forms generated by the Iowa Centennial Committee and the Iowa Bankers Association (IBA) plus its legendary Frank Warner's (1888-1982) explicit and itemized regulations, out-of-state purchasers had it simple and easy: send in your money and we'll fill your order.

This was not the initial plan, however. Ralph Evans (1896-1973), who was chairman of the Subcommittee on Coin of the total Iowa Centennial Committee (PCNS Journal, April 1991) and was primarily responsible for this half dollar's mintage and later distribution and sales, in conjunction with the aforementioned Frank Warner, after their meeting on November 14, 1946, with Iowan

bankers (PCNS Journal, July 1991), had proposed that out-of-state purchasers would be limited to an ordering period of only two days:

It is the belief of the Iowa Centennial Committee that Iowa people should have first access to the purchase of these coins. All persons living outside of Iowa will thereafter be given the opportunity to purchase them. Therefore, the sale of coins to all out-of-state persons will not commence at the Office of the State Treasurer until Friday A.M., December 20th, 1946. It will continue throughout the following business day, Saturday, December 21st, 1946.³

What is significant about this clearly impossible restriction was its reasoning: the fanatical effort to have every opportunity given to Iowans. For the sake of reality and the eventual success of the sales, this regulation was never enforced, although it was published.

The whole Iowa Centennial Committee at its December 1, 1946, meeting adopted Ralph Evans's and Frank Warner's proposals (PCNS Journal, July 1991). At this meeting, the committee discussed and authorized Governor Robert D. Blue's (1898-1989), who was present, consent "that 5000 coins be set aside for out-of-state sales at the price of \$2.50 each plus 50¢ for handling and mailing. These coins to be handled through the Office of the Treasurer of State under his direction together with the Governor and the Committee."⁴ This action was approved by 11 votes yes, zero votes no and one abstention.

Acting with speed and determination that typified the distribution and sales within the state, the Iowa Centennial Committee and Ralph Evans within days had press releases printed and mailed. It seems that just one release was prepared for the media both inside and outside the state. Media within Iowa would mean local newspapers and radio; remember that, in 1946, television was almost unheard of. This press release of ten pages in length was marked "not to be published by newspapers before editions appearing at 10:00 A.M., Tuesday, December 10. Not to be broadcast by radio before 10:00 A.M. same date." Under a separate mailing, mats of the models used in designing the half dollar were sent; however, this author has not located in Ralph Evans's legendary records and remembrances or elsewhere samples or copies of these mats. To whom was this release mailed? Obviously, most, if not all, Iowan newspapers and radio stations received a copy. The author has located only one published news item, in the *Estherville Daily News* (Emmet County) dated Monday, December 16, 1946.⁵ Needless to say, there were many others.

Of course, publicity was important to Iowans, but how did out-of-state potential purchasers learn of the half dollars? According to the Iowa Centennial Committee's own final report, national publications using Iowa centennial material or stories included such diverse publications as *Life*, *Time*, *New York Sun*, *WCTU Champion*, *Boston Transcript*, *My Weekly Reader* and, most importantly to numismatics, *Numismatic Scrapbook Magazine*.⁶ In 1946 there were no national numismatic publications other than some in-house periodicals, except for the American Numismatic Association's (ANA) monthly *The Numismatist* and the Hewitt brothers' *Numismatic Scrapbook Magazine*, then published out of Chicago, Illinois, and promoted as "a monthly magazine for the collector of coins, tokens, medals and paper money."⁷ It is clear, without much research required, that coin collectors, to use the committee's own term, would have learned of the sale from either or both these publications.⁸

The Hewitt brothers reported the sale in their January 15, 1947, issue (Vol. XIII, No. 1) on pages 3 and 4. From this article, it is apparent that the

L. W. HOFFECKER
1814 MONTANA STREET
EL PASO, TEXAS

Nov. 21, 1946

Treasurer
State of Iowa
Des Moines, Iowa

Dear Sir:

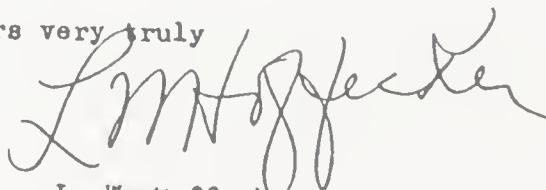
I have been informed by Mr. Loyd A. Gettys that you will handle the distribution of the Iowa commemorative half-dollar. I designed and put the bill through for the Old Spanish trail half-dollar and got the bill passed for the Elgin half-dollar and distributed both of these coins.

I have 1500 holders like the enclosed in the original package they came in and was wondering if you can use them. If so, we will make you a price of \$7.50 per 1000 F.O.B. El Paso on them. Owing to the paper shortage I doubt if they could be bought now at the factory.

Owing to my large mailing list I was able to sell more of the Elgin coins than any other commission that had 25,000 coins and I was able to trade my mailing list to one of the commissions and they claimed it helped them sell a lot of coins. If you would be interested in the mailing list I can furnish you one with several hundred names and addresses of collectors of commemorative half dollars and take some of your coins in payment of same.

Will be pleased to hear from you

Yours very truly


L. W. Hoffecker

LWH:H

Figure 1

previously mentioned December 10, 1946, press release had been sent. The article summarizes the facts on this half dollar and its sales to both lowans and non-lowans: "...some 5,000 pieces were being reserved for sale to out-of-state persons...at \$3.00 which included postage...the application to include the purchase price in money order, draft, or certified check only, made payable to the Treasurer of the State."⁹

The Numismatist reported the sales with two short unrelated notices in its February 1947 issue on pages 167 and 172. Both notices seem to have been published without coordination with each other. One was provided by V. Leon Belt, then president of the ANA: "Order from the Treasurer of State, State House, Des Moines, Iowa. The price is \$3 per coin which includes postage and

insurance. There is no limit on the number of coins you may order. Remit by Bank Draft, Postal Note, or Money Order.”¹⁰ The other notice, in the “Notes and Queries” section, was more editorialized in tone and will be reviewed in a subsequent article along with the report by the Hewitt brothers. Additional notices of the sales were later published in *The Numismatist’s* March 1947 issue on page 222, and the half dollar was first pictured in the April 1947 issue on page 296, thanks to Lloyd B. Gettys, an Iowan banker in Davenport, Iowa, and a member of the ANA’s board of governors.

The Iowa Centennial Committee issued another press release for Wednesday, January 29, 1947, when all the sales restrictions were dropped: “Mail order price for the coin to Iowans as well as to out-of-state purchasers is \$3.00 per coin.”¹¹ In this same release, it was noted that each coin would be placed in a specially-made mailing envelope and sent by registered mail with 27¢ postage included in the expense.¹² To date, no special envelope has been located.

In November 1946 the legendary L. W. Hoffecker of El Paso, Texas, corresponded directly to John M. Grimes, then Iowa state treasurer, and sold 1500 coin holders for \$11.25. Although the State of Iowa still retains the canceled check paying for them, no example of these coin holders has been located. For the insight into Mr. Hoffecker, his November 21, 1946, letter is shown in Figure 1.

It was never the intention of the Iowa Centennial Committee to allow anyone but Iowans first priority to the half dollars. Sales were open to all in early 1947 so as to achieve a sell-out. This point was reiterated in a post card announcement dated February 25, 1947, and mailed to unknown recipients. It is shown in Figure 2. It was also repeated in a March 21, 1947, release when it was noted that fewer than 1400 of the half dollars remained.

State House, Des Moines
February 28, 1947.

This is our final notice to those who want to buy the

IOWA CENTENNIAL HALF DOLLAR

Only 100,000 of these coins were authorized to be minted. More than 96,000 have already been sold. To provide fairest opportunity and widest possible distribution first sales were restricted to one coin per customer.

Our committee now wants to close its affairs, and these few remaining coins are now being sold without restriction as to number of coins to a customer. Therefore, as long as the supply lasts, anyone may now buy as many coins as they want by mailing certified check, bank draft, or money order direct to - STATE TREASURER OF IOWA - DES MOINES, IOWA.

Price is \$3.00 per coin, regardless of number ordered.

We prepay postage and registered mailing.

When ordering, PLEASE PRINT your name and address clearly.

Very truly yours

IOWA CENTENNIAL COMMITTEE

Figure 2

When did the sales end? In a letter dated April 2, 1947, to Frank Warner, Edith W. McElroy, executive secretary of the Iowa Centennial Committee and responsible for much of the work of filling orders, proudly reported:

AND—the last coin went out today. We were all jittery about actually sending out these last coins. Looking back over all the excitement and work of these past few months, it hardly seems possible that the coins are gone and the money on deposit to give Iowa a truly great memorial. I think that all of us who have participated can feel a little proud today.¹³

Found in a file among Ralph Evans' extensive records and remembrances with the notation in pencil across the top "Save for Ralph Evans" was a wire service release in the format of an old teletype printout. It reported that April 3, 1947, marked the close of the nation's most phenomenal coin sale.¹⁴

DES MOINES, APRIL 3-(INS)-DELIVERY OF THE LAST IOWA CENTENNIAL COMMEMORATIVE COIN TO THE POST OFFICE TODAY MARKED THE CLOSE OF THE NATION'S MOST PHENOMENAL COIN SALE.

THE COIN WAS SOLD UNDER A PLAN UNIQUE IN THE ANNALS OF COIN COLLECTING. APPORTIONED TO IOWA BANKS UNDER A COUNTY ALLOTMENT PLAN, THE MAJORITY OF THE COINS WERE HANDLED WITHOUT COST TO THE CENTENNIAL COMMITTEE. OUT OF STATE SALES AND LOCAL SALES FOLLOWING THE RETURN OF COINS FROM THE BANKS WERE HANDLED BY THE TREASURER OF STATE, JOHN GRIMES.

ONE HUNDRED DAYS AFTER THE FIRST COINS WERE DELIVERED TO IOWA PURCHASERS, THE CENTENNIAL COMMITTEE WROTE FINIS TO THE PROJECT. ORDERS WHICH CONTINUE TO POUR IN WILL BE RETURNED TO WOULD BE PURCHASERS.

COINS HAVE BEEN MAILED TO EVERY STATE IN THE UNION AND AROUND THE GLOBE. THE COMMEMORATIVE IS ON EXHIBIT IN WORLD-FAMOUS COIN COLLECTIONS. ITS SALE BROUGHT TREMENDOUS PUBLICITY TO IOWA IN ITS CENTENNIAL YEAR.

FUNDS RESULTING FROM THE SALE WILL BE PLACED IN TRUST UNDER GOVERNOR ROBERT D. BLUE'S DIRECTION PENDING THE FOUNDING OF A SUITABLE IOWA STATE CENTENNIAL MEMORIAL. IOWANS CONTRIBUTED THE BULK OF THE FUND SINCE MORE THAN 90,000 OF THE COINS WERE SOLD WITHIN THE STATE. THE STATE IS HOLDING BACK 1,000 OF THE COINS FOR POSTERITY. OF THE 1,000 COINS, 500 WILL BE SOLD IN 1996, THE STATE'S 150TH BIRTHDAY, AND THE REMAINDER IN 2046.

THE COINS WERE SOLD DURING THE CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION FOR \$2.50 EACH TO IOWANS AND \$3 EACH TO OUT-OF-STATE RESIDENTS.

Notwithstanding these glowing tributes, not everyone was completely satisfied. The reactions from the numismatic fraternity were not all positive, as we will see in the next article.

FOOTNOTES

1. John M. Grimes, letter May 6, 1947, to Lester Milligan. Mr. Milligan was chairman of the Iowa Centennial Committee. Technically, this committee had ceased to function by May 1947.
2. Edith W. McElroy, executive secretary, *Report of Activities of the Iowa Centennial Committee*, p. 16.

3. Frank Warner, memorandum of November 22, 1946, to Ralph Evans.
4. Minutes of the Iowa Centennial Committee, meeting of December 1, 1946.
5. This newspaper was provided by Thomas G. Lammens, assistant curator at the Field Museum in Chicago, Illinois.
6. Edith W. McElroy, *op. cit.* p. 8.
7. *Numismatic Scrapbook Magazine's* motto.
8. There was also a short notice in the January/February 1947 issue of Scott's *Coin Collector's Journal*, which in reality was an in-house publication out of New York City done by Scott Stamp and Coin Company. It, and those mentioned in the text, are the only numismatic publications known by this author to date.
9. *Numismatic Scrapbook Magazine*, January 15, 1947, p. 4. This author is indebted to Bob Rozycki of Sycamore, Illinois, for his gift of a pristine, complete original of this issue.
10. *The Numismatist*, February 1947, p. 167.
11. Edith W. McElroy, press release, Iowa Centennial Committee.
12. This is one of only two or so written references to a coin holder. To date, only one verified coin holder for an Iowa half dollar has been confirmed. Note the postage charge for registered mail in 1947!
13. Edith W. McElroy, letter dated April 2, 1947, to Frank Warner. Ms. McElroy must be credited with much of the work and success with the Iowa half dollar. Although previous articles in this series placed both Governor Blue and Ralph Evans as primary, she must be properly regarded as one of the most significant individuals involved with this half dollar. Her devotion is evident in the daily tallies that she compiled on the sales' progress and mailed routinely to Mr. Evans.
14. Wire service release, April 3, 1947. I wonder if INS means Iowa News Service.

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A RARE ARMENIAN TAKVORIN OF LEVON IV (1320-1342)

BY L. A. SARYAN, PH.D.

One of the distinct pleasures of coin collecting is the unexpected discovery of an extremely rare or unique variety in a group of otherwise common coins. In over a decade of collecting ancient and medieval coins, I have occasionally enjoyed the excitement of such a discovery.

This article describes a rare and unpublished silver takvorin of Levon IV (1320-1342) of Cilician Armenia on which the reverse lion is seen walking to the left instead of the usual right. The coin was procured from a midwestern dealer in late 1983 as part of an unattributed assortment of several otherwise familiar ancient and medieval Armenian coins. At the time of purchase, I was preoccupied with a family move and therefore put the coins away without careful examination. Since the lions on medieval Armenian coinage can head in either direction (on the silver coins of Levon II, for example, the lion points left or right with about equal frequency), the presence of an unusual variety remained unnoticed until several months later when the parcel was reopened for careful study.

LEVON IV AND HIS TIMES

A few words about the Armenian kingdom of Cilicia will help to place this coin in its historical and numismatic context.¹ Though located far from the present Republic of Armenia in the Caucasus (which has been in the news regularly over the past four years), Cilicia has played an important role in Armenian history. Geographically, the country is situated at the northeastern corner of the Mediterranean Sea opposite the island of Cyprus, ringed by the Taurus and Amanus mountain ranges that form a natural barrier protecting good seaports and a fertile plain. During the Middle Ages, Cilicia was a key to the political ambitions of the crusaders who allied themselves with the native Christian Armenian population and used the country as an anchor in their attempts to oust the Moslems from the Holy Land. The country also became an important transit point for East-West trade; caravans from Asia bearing spices and silk were sold in Cilician marts to trading ships bound for southern Europe.

In the first century BC, eastern Cilicia and northern Syria were brought under Armenian control by King Tigranes the Great. Between the 11th and 14th centuries, the Armenians again established themselves as the rulers of Cilicia. The barony of Cilician Armenia, founded in 1080, was elevated in 1198 to the status of a kingdom. For the next 175 years, the kings of Armenia struck large quantities of silver coinage that formed the basis of commercial transactions in the realm.

Commerce was the fuel that kept the Armenian engine moving and, to stimulate it, the kings of Armenia granted special privileges to businessmen from other countries. During the time of Levon IV the general rate of import and export duty was set at four percent; the Pisans, Catalans, Provençals and the Compagnia de Peruzzi of Florence paid two percent, while the Venetians, Genoans, Sicilians and the Compagnia de Bardi were free of duty.² A docu-

ment written by Levon IV in 1333 listing several privileges extended to the Venetian merchants living in Armenia has survived. The following provisions give an idea of the scope of activities that were involved: Venetians living in the Armenian kingdom who manufactured garments from camel hair were to be free of royal jurisdiction concerning their trade; Venetians engaged in the sale of wine would no longer be required to pay the customary tax of one takvorin per week unless they should sell wine in other than the agreed-upon measures; both wine and unfermented grape juice sold by the Venetians were to be exempted from the law requiring the payment of one silver coin per container; special provisions granted to the Venetians with respect to the traffic of tanned hides and other merchandise in the city of Tarsus were extended to the port of Tarsus as well; and the former rule that required the payment of a measure of cloth per bale was rescinded.³

Cilician Armenia's political fortunes were tied to the crusades. As that movement waned and the Christian kingdoms of the Levant began to weaken, Armenia suffered as well. In the late 1200s, the crusader states of Syria, Lebanon and the Holy Land were under constant attack by Moslem forces of the Egyptian Mamelukes; one by one they succumbed in unequal struggles to the Mameluke onslaught. By 1300 Armenia was the only Christian state remaining on the mainland. For the next 75 years the Armenians heroically and single-handedly resisted vastly superior enemy armies. Armenia's declining fortunes during the 14th century are reflected in its coinage.

Under the first two kings, Levon I (1198-1219) and Hetoum I (1226-1270), silver coinage was of high and consistent quality. The basic unit was the tram, weighing about 2.9 grams with a fineness of better than 90%. New trams of 2.6 to 2.8 gram weight and about 70% fineness were struck by Levon II (1270-1289), Smpad (1296-1298) and Gosdantin I (1298-1299). Beginning in the 1300s, debased silver coins known as takvorins were issued by kings Levon III (1301-1307), Oshin (1308-1320), Levon IV, Guy (1342-1344), Gosdantin III (1344-1363), Levon the Usurper (1363-1365) and Gosdantin IV (1365-1373). The weight and fineness of the takvorins gradually declined as the kingdom's fortunes declined in the 14th century; reduction of the weight and fineness of the coinage made it possible to strike more coins from a given quantity of bullion. While the coins of the early rulers show great design originality and variability, 14th century Armenian takvorins are essentially of immobilized design. The typical takvorin shows the king on horseback riding to the right; the reverse shows a lion with a cross facing and headed right. Inscriptions appear in a band along the edge on each face and various marks may appear in the fields.

The reign of Levon IV was long but troubled. Armenia's wealth and strategic location made it vulnerable, and it continued to endure regular Mameluke raids. To secure peace, the Armenians were compelled on more than one occasion to pay onerous tribute to the Moslem invaders. For example, in 1322 the Mamelukes under al-Nasir Muhammad captured and partially destroyed the lucrative port of Ayas, one of the principal centers of maritime and overland transit trade. Nasir then undertook to have the port rebuilt for his own benefit. Only the Armenians were in a position to manage the port, so Nasir imposed on them a fifteen-year truce under which the Armenians were to pay an annual tribute of 1.2 million takvorins, half the income from Ayas, and half the income from the salt revenues.⁴

Although its terms were severe, this peace treaty offered Armenia a chance

to survive and even prosper; unfortunately, internal dissension and struggles within the palace weakened the country. The king attempted to strengthen relations with the West, causing discontent among the nobility and angering some of Armenia's enemies.⁵ The Mamelukes resumed their attacks in violation of the peace treaty, and in 1337 Armenia was compelled to cede the profitable port of Ayas. This setback, writes Bedoukian, "spelled the end of the Armenian kingdom."⁶

DESCRIPTION

The takvorin reported here presents a new obverse/reverse die combination and is assigned Bedoukian number 1994var.



Obverse: King Levon seated on horseback carrying a lance, headed right. Armenian letter "Jeh" beneath lance and behind rider, Armenian letter "Men" beneath horse's head. Inscription in Armenian reads "LEVON TAKA[VOR H]AYO (Levon King of the Armenians). Obverse design, inscription and field markings match Bedoukian nos. 1969-1973.



Reverse: Lion facing and walking left instead of the usual right with cross in field above. Armenian inscription reads [ShINAL I] KAGhKN I SIS (made in the city of Sis). The reverse matches Bedoukian no. 1994.

Fabric: 2.388 grams, 19mm diameter, approximate grade F/F+. Light green deposits on both sides of the coin do not impair important design features.

In preparing his corpus of the Cilician Armenian coinage, Bedoukian studies 399 takvorins of Levon IV from several major collections. Of these, about one-fourth bear an Arabic overstrike or surcharge, indicating that they had been acquired by the Moslems as plunder or tribute and certified for circulation in Moslem territory. Only three coins (less than 1% of the total) are reported with the lion heading left rather than the usual right; two die varieties are listed that differ slightly in reverse inscription.⁷

The remaining question is whether there is any significance to the direction of the lion on medieval Armenian coins; no studies have been devoted to an examination of this matter. On the double trams and half double trams of Levon I, the reverse lion (a crowned sphinx) is almost invariably seen facing forward and headed left. Only a few rare double trams and half double trams show the lion headed right, as do the very rare single lion coronation trams of Levon I struck at about the same time.⁸ The lions on all known regular trams of Hetoum I face forward and head right, although a surviving coinage die preserved at the Yerevan State History Museum appears to show the lion headed left.⁹ On the new trams of Levon II, the lions appear to be headed left or right with about equal frequency; Bedoukian suggests that, for this king, lion-to-left coins are of higher quality and may be earlier issues.¹⁰ On the immobilized takvorins of Levon III, Oshin, and their successors, the lion almost invariably is headed and facing right. Only a few rare exceptions, such as the coin described here, are reported.¹¹

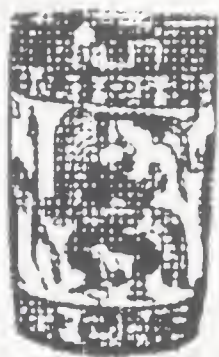
Probably the relative consistency of the lion direction for Levon I and Hetoum I was a matter of policy, with only an occasional mistake being made. In other cases, the lion's direction may have been left to the discretion of the

diecutter. For the 13th century kings, one may speculate that the direction of the lion was reversed when the ancestry of the monarch changed. Hetoum I, for example, was the first king of Armenia descended from the House of Lampron, while his predecessor Levon I was descended from the rival Roupinian family. The use of lions headed in both directions on the coinage of Levon II could reflect the fact that he was descended from both royal houses. In the 14th century, when the design was frozen, any deviations were probably the result of diecutter haste or error. This theory is not airtight, however, as it may not account for all the available evidence. In any event, the topic should be of interest to Armenian specialists and could form the subject of future studies.

FOOTNOTES

1. L.A. Saryan, *Armenian Coins and Armenian History*, **The Journal of the Pacific Coast Numismatic Society**, No. 18, January 1989, pages 8-17, and L.A. Saryan, *An Armenian Medieval Bronze Group*, **The Journal of the Pacific Coast Numismatic Society**, No. 23, April 1990, pages 4-7.
2. Paul Z. Bedoukian, **Coinage of Cilician Armenia** (New York, 1962), p. 41.
3. *Ibid.*, p. 38.
4. *Ibid.*, p. 16.
5. The problems faced by Levon IV in the 14th century are, in many respects, similar to those presently confronting the government of the Armenian Republic.
6. *Ibid.*, p. 17.
7. *Ibid.*, p. 374. Overstruck Armenian coins are discussed by Bedoukian in *Selected Numismatic Studies* (Los Angeles, 1981), pages 161-171.
8. *Ibid.*, pages 131ff.
9. *Ibid.*, pages 235ff.; M.E. Karapetian and H.V. Sarkissian, *The Dies of a Zabel-Hetoum Tram*, **Armenian Numismatic Journal**, Vol. 10, No. 3, September 1984, pp. 24-28.
10. Bedoukian, *op. cit.*, p. 87.
11. In addition to three takvorins of Levon IV, Bedoukian, *op. cit.*, pp. 382-383, lists two takvorins (Bedoukian nos. 2041 and 2048) of Gosdantin III in which the lion is seen walking left.

The author is grateful to Yeghia T. Nercessian who examined and photographed the coin and to Dr. Paul Z. Bedoukian who offered helpful comments.



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HISTORY OF THE PACIFIC COAST NUMISMATIC SOCIETY

BY DAVID W. LANGE

ESTABLISHING AN IDENTITY

It is evident that some of those who attended the 1915 convention of the American Numismatic Association (ANA) lingered for a few days, as they were present at the PCNS meeting of September 7. The society's traditional meeting day of the last Wednesday had not yet been established, and the early meetings were called monthly at the discretion of Secretary I. Leland Steinman. Guests in attendance at this gathering included newly elected ANA President H. O. Granberg who gave an address to the infant society and displayed some legendary American rarities. Among these were an 1802 half dime, a quarter dollar of 1823, both varieties of the 1796 half dollar, an 1804 silver dollar and an original striking of the Confederate half dollar. Elected honorary members were Mr. and Mrs. Edgar H. Adams, F. J. Loer, Dr. and Mrs. J. M. Henderson, Mr. and Mrs. B. Max Mehl and H. O. Granberg.

In light of the recent successful convention, it was only natural that the society should join the ANA, and this motion was approved at the November meeting. There were no further actions of note during 1915, the regulars gathering for the primary purpose of showing off items from their collections. It must be noted that the society at this time offered little in the way of structured programs, meeting notices being in the form of a handwritten postcard sent out by Secretary Steinman. Gatherings were held at his office in San Francisco, as they would be for the next year or so.

As sales of the Panama-Pacific International Exposition coins were winding down, Farran Zerbe began to take stock of his efforts in this regard. He displayed at the January, 1916, meeting a complete set of these coins. This set had been the 20th struck, that honor having gone to Mr. Steinman, who now purchased the set from Mr. Zerbe. To further celebrate what had been a successful commemorative program, Zerbe donated to the PCNS a mint bag with seal intact that had formerly contained 1,000 PPIE gold dollars.

With its limited activities, the society had initially seen no need for establishing dues. The popularity of exhibiting led to a call for display cases, and it was thought proper that this should be paid for equally by all members. Thus, a monthly dues payment of ten cents became effective March 1, 1916.

Another likely cause of expense was the growing number of honorary members and the printing and mailing costs associated with such recognition. The society already had the eight honorary members named above, and another eleven would be added during the next five years. These included George H. Barron, curator of the Park Museum (now the M. H. deYoung Memorial Museum), T. W. H. Shanahan, superintendent of the San Francisco Mint, Congressman Julius Kahn of California, proposer of the PPIE commemoratives, Victor D. Brenner, designer and sculptor of the Lincoln cent, Howland Wood, president of the American Numismatic Society, Albert R. Frey, ANA president 1905-07, R. A. Kuner and Bertha Kuner, son and daughter of pioneer California engraver Albrecht Kuner, M. J. Kelly, superin-

tendent of the San Francisco Mint succeeding Mr. Shanahan, Waldo C. Moore, ANA President 1919-20 and Moritz Wormser, ANA President 1921-25.

In addition to its honorary members, a number of prominent numismatic figures from around the nation held regular membership in the PCNS. Among these were Hugo Landecker, Thomas Elder and Wayte Raymond. Being associated with such figures led to the society receiving regular mailings of new auction catalogs and price lists, these forming the nucleus of what would become a very significant library. Other correspondents from whom the society received catalogs included B. Max Mehl, Henry Chapman, Lyman Low and William Hesslein.

This growing accumulation of numismatic literature prompted a relocation of the monthly meetings to the larger offices of President Fred T. Huddart at the Board of Trade Building, 444 Market Street. Following this move in September 1916, President Huddart ultimately donated a large accumulation of numismatic literature to the Society, along with a fine bookcase. Both were to be stored on site for the use of all members.

It is not known to what extent the members used this material, as the minutes reveal that the primary focus of the meetings remained the exhibiting of one's collections. The scope of such exhibits was largely limited to silver and gold coins of the United States. These were far and away the areas of greatest interest to the majority of members. There were notable exceptions, however. At the meeting of March 1916, August Reimers displayed a collection of Greek tetradrachms which were described as being of the finest period and in excellent condition.

Those few who did maintain an interest in world coins generally confined their collections to the emissions of northern and western Europe. Basil Brandon was, perhaps, the most regular exhibitor, his presentations always centering around the coinage of Britain. In keeping with his eclectic taste, Mr. Zerbe's displays were always of the most unusual character, an example being his assortment of prisoner currency from Sing Sing.

As a rule, the meetings of 1916 through 1918 were uneventful, members sticking to their routine of bringing items to display. There were some occasions which are worthy of mention. For example, at the meeting of September 1916, Mr. Steinman revealed that the chief coiner of the San Francisco Mint had permitted him to view trial strikes of the new Winged Liberty dime. The coin would be released to circulation in a few weeks, and his opinion of it was very favorable.

The following month's meeting was the occasion of a banquet honoring Farran Zerbe. His work with the PPIE now concluded, he was soon to return to his native Tyrone, Pennsylvania.¹ Sixteen members and one guest were present for this gathering at the Union League Club in San Francisco.

President Huddart exhibited highlights from his recent purchase of the collection previously held by the Society of California Pioneers. This hodge-podge of numismatica had long been a source of consternation for Zerbe, who had proclaimed on numerous occasions that it consisted primarily of fakes and alterations. Only the month before he had read to the members of the PCNS a letter submitted to the *San Francisco Examiner* in which he rebutted a claim made by the Society of California Pioneers that the United States Treasury had offered \$20,000 for its 1804 dollar. Zerbe was quick to point out that no coin had ever brought such a huge sum to date, and least of all an altered piece. His thoughts upon the announcement by President Huddart



PACIFIC COAST NUMISMATIC SOCIETY, BANQUET FOR THE 4TH ANNIVERSARY, JUNE 24TH, 1919

Center of head table, Farran Zerbe; to his right, I. Leland Steinman; to his left, Charles B. Turbill; at far left is H. L. Hill

that the collection was now his are unrecorded. In deference to his friend and colleague, Zerbe managed to hold his tongue, and the evening passed without incident.

One concern that troubled the society was its lack of growth. Following the initial enthusiasm of its first eighteen months, new applications tapered off, and attendance began to wane. A typical meeting drew eight or nine members, with two or three exhibiting regularly. A recruiting committee was formed in an attempt to remedy the situation. Little was achieved in this area, attendance neither falling nor rising during the next few years. A relocation of the monthly meetings in July 1918 to the Russ Building at 235 Montgomery Street seems to have had no effect upon either membership or attendance.

Despite its own shortcomings, the PCNS continued to maintain its support for the ANA. While Secretary Steinman wrote to society members who were not already members of the ANA urging them to join, Oliver Beardslee was appointed to secure for San Francisco, if possible, the association's 1919 convention. The latter effort was in vain, however, as the ANA had no intention of repeating such a poorly attended convention, regardless of what it may have thought of the city.²

The First World War went largely unnoticed by the society, if its minutes may be considered a true indicator. Although Farran Zerbe frequently exhibited war-related numismatica, the only formal action taken by the society with respect to this great conflict was to suspend for the duration of the war the payment of dues for any member who was in uniform. It is not made clear whether this actually applied to anyone then a member.

Among the effects that the war had upon the domestic economy, one was noted by Mr. Zerbe, who displayed an assortment of money substitutes utilized in this country during the nationwide cent shortage of 1917-18. He further commented that at the current price of silver, the face value of our coins might soon be exceeded by their bullion value.

One regular feature of the meetings during the war years was an auction. It was peculiar in that members were expected to bring one or more items to be sold, with a reserve specified beforehand. If any item exceeded its reserve, the society's treasury was to receive 60% of the additional amount realized. This odd form of fundraising was apparently conceived to forestall a dues increase.

The society's progress at this time was made difficult by the ongoing illness of President Huddart, who was absent during most of 1918. His subsequent death on January 13, 1919, was a blow to the society. It was quickly resolved to have a portrait medal struck in his honor, but nothing more is said of this matter in the minutes, and the project must have been dropped. Another project that evidently went unfulfilled was the society's appeal to the state of California to strike medals for presentation to the returning servicemen of the Golden State.

Despite these setbacks, the society began to flourish under the administration of the new president, Farran Zerbe, who had been unanimously selected by the board of governors to succeed Mr. Huddart. Among the first orders of business was the preparing of a seal for the society. A pen-and-ink sketch submitted by Secretary Steinman was examined by the members and a motion passed to pursue the matter at the following month's meeting. Action on the proposed seal was deferred time after time over the next several months, until the members finally approved a different design submitted by Zerbe. A

seal-and-die fund was established with proceeds of nearly \$50 being added to it as the result of an auction of donated items. The seal was cut, and an illustration of it appears in *The Numismatist* along with the minutes of the society's meeting of May 25, 1920.³

Zerbe was a tireless publicist for the PCNS, and dozens of clippings from local newspapers have been preserved in the society's archives detailing its proceedings, whether noteworthy or mundane. Apparently Vice-President Charles B. Turrill was also a figure of some renown, for he appeared in the local papers with much fanfare during the 1919-21 period. A number of these stories have to do with efforts to educate the general public. In Zerbe's own hand are sarcastic annotations to newspaper articles by non-numismatists in which the facts are repeatedly bludgeoned. Further accounts are found of attempts at informing the public of the real value of their old coins and notes. These are reinforced through correspondence between Oliver Beardslee of the society and various individuals who learned of the society through newspaper stories.

The announcement that the the Mint had destroyed 360 million silver dollars and would subsequently be recoinng them under provisions of the Pittman Act prompted Zerbe into further action. It is not known where the idea originated, but it was Zerbe who was asked to prepare and read before the 1920 convention of the ANA a paper calling for the coining of a dollar to commemorate peace. At this time, the United States was still officially in a state of war with Germany, although fighting had ceased in November 1918. Congress' rejection of President Wilson's peace proposals had caused him to suffer a great humiliation, and it was not likely that a formal peace would be made before the new administration entered power in March 1921. It was a widely held opinion among numismatists that the recoinage of silver dollars should utilize a commemorative theme marking the eventual signing of a treaty, as it was the war which had led to their melting in the first place.

Zerbe again read this paper before the Pacific Coast Numismatic Society at its September 1920 meeting, and the society subsequently passed a resolution prepared by Vice-President Turrill that Congress and the Mint commence work on a coin marking the end of the war. Both the peace treaty and the commemorative coin were stalled in debate for many months, and the recoinage of silver dollars proceeded with a modified version of George Morgan's Liberty head. Using his influence at the San Francisco Mint, Zerbe obtained some specimen strikings of the 1921-S Morgan Dollar which he distributed to the members at face value during the meeting of May 17, 1921.

It wasn't until November 1921 that sculptor Anthony de Francisci was given the nod to complete his work. Rushed into production, the peace dollar was quickly modified to lower its relief, and both versions were placed into circulation on January 3, 1922. To the consternation of everyone within the numismatic community, no mention was made in the general press of the role played by the ANA and the PCNS in securing the new coin.

After a lapse of three years, the PCNS again gathered for a banquet on the occasion of its fourth anniversary, June 24, 1919. By all accounts, this was a splendid affair and one that would be repeated annually almost without interruption to the present day. It was held at the Hotel Stewart with 19 persons attending. An unsigned ballad was prepared in memory of the occasion and submitted to a commercial numismatic journal:

We are sixteen — the diners sang,
As down to eat they sat,
And if we're called a merry bunch
We'll let it go at that
We're something more than merry men
We're coin collectors true —
Each one is worthy of his place
In the numismatic crew

We are sixteen — the diners sang,
As they prepared to eat.
And as a numismatic bunch
We sure are hard to beat.
And each of us an expert is
In his own particular line,
A few of us are really "choice"
And the balance — "exceedingly fine."

We are nineteen — the diners sang,
But three of us came too late.
And so their faces do not appear
On the Messrs.' Water's plate.
We're nineteen here — but sixteen there,
They'll come early another night,
For the San Francisco banquets are
Extremely pleasant and bright.

We are nineteen — the diners sang,
And we've brought our razor and knife,
You can see them hanging on the wall
But we've none of us brought our wife.
Our wives are better by far at home
Cleaning our coins of Greece and Rome,
(But they should do as they do in the East
And take their wives to the merry feast.)⁴

The intensity of activity that the society enjoyed during the years 1919-21 was brought to an abrupt halt through two major losses. The first was the relocation to the east of Farran Zerbe. Although he would remain president for another two-and-a-half years, Zerbe was seldom present to maintain the level of energy that had characterized his term. He embarked upon a tour of the nation's cities, presenting for a fee his enormous exhibit titled "Moneys of the World". Zerbe and his mobile museum were hired by banks and fairs for a week or two at a time, and he lived in hotel rooms for much of the next five years.

Compounding this loss was the death of founding Secretary I. Leland Steinman in January 1922. Coming at an early age, his passing was a keen blow to the society from which it would not recover for another decade. Lacking innovative and energetic leaders, the society would enter a period of decline and stagnation throughout the 1920s. How it survived this troubled time to be reborn under new leadership will be told in the next installment of this history.

FOOTNOTES

1. This relocation must have been of short duration, as he was again a frequent attendee at the meetings by the middle of 1918.
2. The ANA did ultimately return to San Francisco some thirty years later. While better attended the second time around, this convention was deemed a failure in other respects by the ANA, which laid the blame squarely upon the sponsoring organization, the Pacific Coast Numismatic Society.
3. *The Numismatist*, June 1920. Local legend has it that Victor D. Brenner may have modeled the Society's original seal. This is prompted by a letter from Brenner to Steinman dated January 5, 1920 in which the former states "I have the plaster cast for your club ready, and I would like to release it to you " It is not clear which work he refers to, although Steinman had previously been promised a plaque by Brenner during the 1919 convention of the ANA at Philadelphia. Presentation of this plaque was made by Steinman to the society at its meeting of February 24, 1920. Circumstantial evidence suggests that the society's seal may indeed be an uncataloged work by V. D. Brenner.
4. *Mehl's Numismatic Monthly*, October 1919.



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On Becoming a God

Woe is me, I think I am becoming a god.

—EMPEROR VESPASIAN



ESPASIAN WAS THE FIRST ROMAN EMPEROR in over forty years to die of natural causes. When he lay on his deathbed at age 70, he made the memorable comment that he thought he was becoming a god.

The practice of emperor worship started with Augustus, who authorized officials of the eastern provinces to establish temples and cults for his own worship. This practice was nothing new in the east, where the worship of Persian and Greek kings as gods, even during their lifetimes, was common. For Rome, it was

the beginning of a state religion which contradicted all principles of the old Roman Republic.

When Augustus died, the practice of deifying the dead emperor was begun, and, with the exception of especially-hated rulers, it became common practice for each new ruler to recognize his predecessor as a god in the Roman pantheon. Coinage carrying obverse inscriptions with DIVO in conjunction with the rulers' names were special issues honoring the deified emperors. Reverse types with CONSECRATIO or MEMORIAE also fall into these scarce issues.

The process for an emperor to become a god was quite simple—die without the public or your successor hating you! Still, there were some notable instances of emperors passing into the land of the gods through exceptional incidents.

Most of the emperors died of violence; less than a third died of natural causes. Most were killed in the process of the next ruler taking over—in battle, by suicide to avoid capture or by assassination. These were the common ends of most emperors. In fact it is hard to find emperors who do not die in one of those ways, but the few exceptions provide some interesting stories.



Nero was the first of the emperors to commit suicide. His popularity in Rome was on the decline, and several well-placed palace officials lead him to believe a revolt was in the works. He fled the city to avoid a plot, but the general public turned on him soon afterward because he had abandoned the city. Once a genuine revolt was in the works, he realized his position and committed suicide in 68 AD. Suicide was more honorable than defeat, and it became a common cause of death among emperors.

Emperor Geta was killed in the palace, actually in his mother's arms

according to historians, by his brother and co-ruler Caracalla in 212. While murder was common among emperors, fratricide was exceptional. It also caused a serious rift between the surviving mother and son. Julia Domna, the empress-mother, starved herself to death.

Looking for a cause of death not already listed becomes difficult among the later emperors. Hostilian ruled for only a few months in 251 AD before succumbing to the plague, the first emperor to die of that cause, though it could be viewed as a natural death in his day.

Just two years later, Uranius Antoninus became the first emperor to die

without history recording the cause! He was fighting the Sassanians in the eastern provinces, and he was either killed or abdicated when Valerian arrived on the scene.

Valerian provides the most bizarre example of an unknown death for an emperor. Valerian went east to fight the Sassanian empire in 260 AD and was captured *alive*, something all previous rulers had avoided as much as the plague, if not more so. The fate of this emperor is unknown except that he died in captivity after at least several months—possibly several years. Shapur, the Sassanian

king who held him, wanted to make an example of Valerian. While he survived, Valerian was required to kneel as a foot stool for Shapur's use when mounting his horse. When Valerian finally died, Shapur had his skin preserved in the palace to show to visiting Roman diplomats as a warning!

In 283 AD, Emperor Carus was at war with the Sassanians again. His cause of death is open to doubt—it is recorded that he was struck by lightning, an act of the gods which could not have but pleased the Sassanians. There was suspicion that he was done away with by one of his senior guards who preferred that Jove get the credit.

An accidental death was rare. The one ruler who clearly died by accident was Jovian. A brazier of charcoal was left in his tent on February 16, 364 AD, and he died of the fumes after ruling for only seven months, all of which time he spent on the eastern edge of the empire with his troops, fighting the Sassanians.

The two emperors who ruled the longest died of natural causes. Augustus ruled a little over 40 years, dying in 14 AD at 75 years of age. The only ruler to outlast Augustus was Theodosius II, who died in 450 AD at the age of 49 after being emperor for 48 years! He had become ruler as an infant when his father proclaimed him co-ruler of the empire to preserve the dynastic succession. His death was natural, but was hastened by injuries from a hunting accident.

The last ruler of the Western Roman empire was Romulus Augustus. He ruled less than a year before being deposed by the first barbarian king of Italy



in 476 AD. He was allowed to retire to private life, and his fate remains unknown beyond his abdication.

Of more than 120 emperors, nearly 100 died by violence. The two longest-ruling emperors died of natural causes after ruling the empire for a total of 89 years, almost 20% of the duration of the Western Roman empire. Augustus is well-studied by students of Roman history, while Theodosius II is largely ignored!



Curiously, none of the emperors during the last 150 years of the empire became gods. Before Constantine the Great died in 337 AD, he converted to Christianity. The rulers from this time onward did not practice the deification of the imperial cult. In fact, due to the warring among Constantine's predecessors, the practice of deification of the past emperor fell by the wayside late in the third century. Carus, the victim of Jove's thunderbolt, was one of the last rulers to be honored as a god on the coinage of his successors. The practice continued on a limited basis into the time of Constantine, prior to his recognition of Christianity, but was limited to commemorative issues for family members who had ruled.

A collection of the special coinages for the deified emperors provides an interesting and highly specialized approach to Roman coins, but one which is rich in the history of the times.



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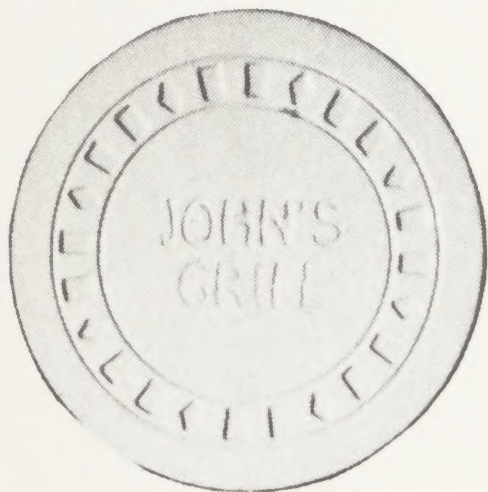
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San Francisco Through Its Exonumia

JOHN'S GRILL

by Jerry F. Schimmel

Back in the 1930s, Dashiell Hammett used to down a few at John's Grill. That was when he was still struggling to get his best-known novels published: *The Maltese Falcon*, *The Thin Man*, *The Glass Key*, etc. The grill itself opened a couple of years after the 1906 earthquake at 57 Ellis Street. From 1923 on its address has been continuously at number 63, just around the corner from the Market Street cable car turntable. The restaurant is an attractive place to visit with dark wood paneling, brass fixtures and autographed photos of past and contemporary San Francisco personalities. Many of the signatories are still mealtime or happy hour frequenters of the bar.



A drink token has been in use there since 1972, a medium green, molded clay disc in the style of a casino gaming chip. It is 39.5mm in diameter with a plain edge. The circular design adjacent to the rim is incuse and known as "square-square-diamond" according to Herz. The gilt legend is also incuse and reads **JOHN'S GRILL, GOOD FOR A DRINK**. Many contemporary California bars use similar chips as credit pieces, although outside of San Francisco they are more frequently used by card parlors for legal gambling.

SOURCES

Guide to Collecting Gaming Checks and Chips by Howard Herz (1985)
San Francisco City Directory, various years



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WISDOM OF THE ANCIENTS

The only certain ground for discovering truth is the faculty of discriminating false from true, distinguishing the sound and genuine from the base and counterfeit, as the silver assayers do with coins. When you have at last managed to acquire such a faculty, then you may <invest>. Otherwise, I can assure you, you will be led by the nose by anyone who chooses to do it, and you will run after anything they hold out to you, as cattle do after a green bough.*

—from LUCIAN, Satirist-philosopher, born circa 120 A.D.

*originally: investigate the Stoic doctrines